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To: R6_DWH_Info@epa.gov
Subject: Fw: GULF SPILL: Enviro groups to sue BP for putting 'entire ecosystem at risk' (05/25/2010)
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GULF SPILL: Enviro groups to sue BP for putting 'entire ecosystem at risk' (05/25/2010)



Ruben Casso

to: David Bary

05/25/2010 04:37 PM

GULF SPILL: Enviro groups to sue BP for putting 'entire ecosystem at risk' (05/25/2010)

Allison Winter, E&E reporter

Two environmental groups announced plans today to sue BP PLC for hurting or killing imperiled species with spilled crude in the Gulf of Mexico.

Defenders of Wildlife and the Southern Environmental Law Center say the company has violated the Endangered Species Act with its ruptured oil well and use of dispersants to combat the spill.

"This is shaping up as an unprecedented disaster for the people and wildlife of the Gulf," said Catherine Wannamaker, an attorney for the law center. "From plankton to endangered sperm whales to fishermen, BP has put an entire ecosystem at risk and must be held accountable."

The groups sent the 60-day notice of intent to sue to the company today, the first step before formal litigation.

There are 32 threatened or endangered species who live in or pass through the Gulf, including five kinds of sea turtles, the sperm whale and the gulf sturgeon. ESA prohibits harassing, harming or killing species without a special permit.

The lawsuit adds to a growing docket of litigation over the spill. At least three lawsuits have been filed under the National Environmental Policy Act, which does not require prior notice.

The law center and Defenders of Wildlife last week sued the Minerals Management Service for failing to require a thorough examination of risks from exploratory drilling operations like BP's.